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T R E A T I S E,

Shewing the Liberty and Bondage of the
Will of Man.

Or, A

T R E A T I S E

Shewing the Bondage of the Will of Man by nature and the
Liberty thereof by Grace.

The: Moor



L O N D O N,

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TO THE
CHRISTIAN
READER.



Beloved Christian, my desire is, that none of us that profess our selves Christians, and in that respect brethren; may be found walking in that evil way mentioned, Psal. 50. 19, 20. much more that we use not the same as our weapons to maintain our opinions, and to beat down what we fancie to be error, for its an evil and dangerous way, and Truth needs no such weapons for its defence, nor to confute error, and sure this can be no other than evil speaking, and false, to give out of any that understand, and believe, Jesus Christ by the grace of God to have tasted death for every man, and to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole World, and the enlightner of every man that comes into the World. That they therefore exalt the nature of man fallen, and would that man by nature hath freedom of will to that is Spiritual good: Surely this report hath risen in the first raisers of it, from ignorance of the very voyce of that Doctrine of grace, and from conceits of foolishness in the Testimony of Jesus, in the plain sayings thereof, and malice against such as believe to stick close to

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the same, and will not be waved by Philosophy and vain deceit to prefer mens garnishings before the plain Text: Hence such envy and strife, and charges of holding such goodness in nature fallen. But whence such wisdom comes, and what accompanies it, see in James 3. 14, 15, 16. And it is to be feared there is some secret magnifying of willing and running where they are; in this rash censure of some to assert them where they are not, and so a putting them out of place, or else an overcontempt in denying their use where they ought to be, for surely the attainment of remission of sins, justification, righteousness, and eternal life, It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, Rom. 9. 16. For chusing, willing, yea and running too, to attain satisfaction to fleshly and sinfull lusts. I believe we all think this in the nature of man as fallen full enough; and the end wofull also. But to will and run to attain the knowledge of God, and peace, and righteousness, and life with him, surely such a thing as this springs not from fallen nature onely, but hath some light, or knowledge of truth, to occasion it, though happily abused, or imprisoned by some advancing their own wisdom with it, Joh. 1. 4, 5, 9, 10, 11. Rom. 1. 18, 19, 20, 21. Yet such a willing and running may be found in natural men, and how highly esteemed soever by them, yet not aproved of God; Luke 16. 15. as to say when mens willing and running is to establish a righteousness of their own by the works of the

Law,

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Law, to get the righteousness of God, Rom. 9. 31, 32. & 10. 1, 2, 3. Or to get Christ and Faith in him, that they may believe He died for them, and is theirs, and they his, and shall have eternal life by him, if their willing and running for this, be either in and by the Traditions and Doctrines of men, Matt. 15. 8, 9. Or by their own wisdom and strength from a self-principle to avoid the second death, and get eternal life, 1 Sam. 2. 9. Ezek. 4. 6, 7. Joh. 1. 13. All Devotions, Conversions, Reformations, and Attainments got in and by such willing and running is but fleshly and unprofitable, Joh. 3. 6. and such in their hopes prove either Ismaelites the seed of the bond-woman; or Edomites, that as profane Esau that preferred a mess of pottage before his birthright, or as those boasters, Pro. 30. and wandering Stars and Clouds without water Jude. And howsoever in words they may ascribe this their willing and running to the grace of God, to call it the effect of his Almighty power, yet will not God justify them in it, nor can they obtain the Righteousness of God by it, or yet are they any better than natural men, what ever they profess, Luke 18. 9, 14. 2 Cor. 10. 12, 18. But I suppose this is not the willing and running that is meant in the strife, but there is a willing and running that is good and approved: Commanded, Isai 1. 19. and required in all that render service to God, Exod 35. 5, 21. 1 Chron. 29. 5. Professed of the Saints. 1 Cor. 9. 24, 26. which is wrought in the belief of the Gospel, Rom. 1. 16. Pf. 11. 3.

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in which every good endeavour is accepted, 2 Cor. 8. 12. and without which none come to the use of understanding, do obtain the Kingdom, Matth. 11. 12. Now this willing and running, as appears in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is such as first is produced by the rich and free mercie of God held forth in the death of Jesus Christ, Rom. 5. 8, 10. Tit. 3. 4, 5. And secondly, is carried on in dependance on God for his performance of the good he hath promised, Gal. 5. 5. And thirdly, seasoned with submission, and patience to wait on God for his performing of his promises, Heb. 10. 35, 36. And fourthly, exercised in such ways and means as God himself hath appointed and approved, Isai 64. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 9. Yet the obtaining is not of him that thus willet and runneth, nor is it in the power, or for the desert of such willing and running; but of God his free gift, who freely first prevented by shewing mercy, and so effected the will, and in the series of his goodness both drew and answered: And if willing and running were understood and put in their right place, it would abate the strife, but I fear that Satan hath a more mischievous design in raising the contention, and casting that foul Aspersiō on believers: For he knoweth how deeply he hath overthrown us; And how far we fell in our first Father, and how by reason thereof we are as we come forth from him, blinde, deaf, dead, in respect of Spiritual life, and favour, and Communion with God; so as we can neither help our selves out of our misery,

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misery, nor take hold of help though wrought for us, and tendered to us by another.

And he knoweth, that the Son of God hath taken the nature of Mankind, & was in that nature made under the Law for them, and so died the death and wrought Redemption for them, that whoever believe in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

And he knoweth that God hath immeasurably filled Jesus Christ with spirit in the nature of Man, even for the rebellious, and that in certain mediums he thereby gives forth some Testimonies of his goodness, and in the Gospel a full Declaration: that men might believe and so turn in to him,

And he knoweth that God through Christ, and for his sake hath given to men an understanding above the beasts of the earth; and some light, that they might discern and attend the means, in which his goodness is testified and his Spirit working.

And he knoweth that if such mediums abide unclouded and unperverted before them, and that if they according to the light given them, do in seeing see, and attend to that discovered in the means; The grace discovered would enlighten their mindes, draw their attentions, and work willingness and desires in their hearts to receive, and God would convert and heal them.

Therefore this enemy of Mankind exerciseth his malice in many wiles, to withdraw men from beholding and attending the truth, as presented in those mediums, especially in the Gospel. And this he

doth

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doth sometime like himself as an Angel of darkness, with presentation of necessities, or worldly honours, and riches, or persecutions; but sometime counterfeiting as if he were an Angel of light, pretending light, holiness, and greater attainment, and for this cause hath his Ministers appearing as Ministers of righteousness, to oppose the Testimony of Christ, as set forth in the plain sayings of the Gospel, & also in the extent of it: knowing if that be hid from men, the door of saving knowledge, the foundation of sound repentance and faith, the medium to set their will at liberty, and make free to choose life is hidden from them, & then they are liable to be taken in his snare, and seducements. But that he's mischievous end may not be seen, and that he may prevail to put men by attending to such plain declaration of the Gospel, he will colour over his business with a pretence of magnifying free and particular grace in a more excellent way, and cry down the plain Testimony of the Gospel if received in the plain import of the words, as exalting the nature of Man, and attributing free-will thereto, to the derogation, or abating the honour of the grace of God, and so scare men from attending that in which they might meet with life; For the preventing of which mischievous design, and removing that false aspersions cast on the truth and lovers thereof. I have writ these ensuing lines, which I desire may be read, and the homeliness of the stile pardoned, but the things themselves tried and received so far as they appear consonant to the Testimony and sayings of the Gospel, and no farther: The Lord in mercy fill us with the blessing of the Gospel and make us of one minde therein, as prayeth the Well-willer in Christ.

THO: MOOR.

A

TREATISE

About the will in Man; and what freedom
is in it to any thing truly good, and
whence that comes.



He great love of God to fallen mankinde, in giving his own Son to take the nature of man, yea to be the publick man, and under the law, for, and in the room of all men; and so to dye for them all, that first and accursed Death, in which all mankinde had else for ever perished: And Gods being so well pleased with this Death of one for all that he hath raised, and exalted him, and made him Lord of all, and given them all over into his dispose, and born witness of him, and set him forth in the Gospel to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that whosoever believeth in him, may receive forgiveness of sins, and have eternal life; and that such as when means are used towards them rebell willingly against him, may be justly judged by him.

This is fully, and plainly recorded in Scripture, and declared as the ground and foundation of repentance, faith, love to God and men of preaching the Gospel to all, of asserting the Resurrection of all, and of Christ his judging all, as is plain in the Scripture, and hath thereby been clearly proved by many.

Yet by some, and such also as are in esteem both for learning
B and

and godliness; this truth is not onely opposed with many subtilties, cavils, and invention of absurdities to fasten on it, but even the clear contrary Assertion affirmed, as to say; that God never loved all men; *Christ* did not dye for all men; he is not the propitiation for the sins of the whole world of mankind, calling these their negations Truth, and the contrary affirmations of the holy Ghost, Error, and Heresie, and although the best of them can finde but carnal weapons, as misreporting the words they should answer, wrong and cloudy stating the question, multiplying queries, scholastical flourishes, Rhetorical chidings, scoffings, perversion, and wresting of Scripture sayings; & not one plain saying of the holy Ghost, to avouch and countenance their negation withall; but such expositions, limitations, and exceptions; as tend as much to deny Gods creation of all men by *Christ* his making all men righteous in the first publick man; that all have sinned, that there is any cause for, or door of repentance for all men; That there is any real truth in the Gospel to be preached to all men, that all men are obliged to *Iesus Christ* for any saving good, why they should live to him, or that they shall all rise and come to judgement before him, nor have they any clearer testimony in the Scripture for these or any of these than for that which they deny; I hope God will one day give them to see, & so bring them from opposing to acknowledging the truth, and for that cause I have writ these few lines, if it may be to remove one of their great pretended stumbles, in answer to a groundless slander, which is this; that such as believe *Iesus Christ* to have dyed for all men do also therewith hold, that men have free will by nature, and so magnifie the nature of man, and free will in man, Derogating thereby from the honour of the rich, and free grace of God.

By what reason, or learning this should be raised to be a consequent of the belief of *Christ* his having dyed for all men, I know

I know not, nor believe that any can shew, but I shall endeavour to clear that part of opposed truth from giving any cause at all; or having so much as any shew for such an absurdity to be cast upon it, and I am sure many believing the truth are slandered; And for the clearing the truth, and them, I desire that these four things may be considered, and what the Scripture saith of them may be believed.

1. The distinction the Scripture holdeth forth between that which *Jesus Christ* as the publick man, distinct from all other men, undertook to do, and hath done in his own personal body with God for men, without reference to the knowledge, will, or acting of other men, and as and while they were enemies: and that which as the publick man, by virtue of that done in his own bodie, being filled with power, authority, offices, and spirit, he hath undertaken to do, doth, and will do, for, to, and in men, that they might know, will, act, and enjoy the virtue and blessing of that he hath done in his own body: The first of these being done, perfect, compleated, without the knowledge, will, or act of any other man in his undertaking, and Gods acceptance, and whether men know, and believe it, or not, yea, while they are enemies, and declared that men might know, and so will, act, and enjoy; and so demonstrates men by nature, dead, enemies, and wanting both knowledge of, and will to any spiritual good before: the other to be after done and where begun, yet not compleated fully, till the visible return of *Jesus Christ* in glorie. 2. *Cor.* 5. 14, 15, 19, 21. 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. and 3. 18. *Col.* 1. 20, 21. and 1. *John* 3. 1, 2. which things having largely discoursed into Treatises now publick I forbear here, onely I mention this to shew, that the right understanding, and belief of *Jesus Christ* the free gift of God, and his death for all men, and that while enemies; and his ascending to receive, and send forth spirit in the Gospel to make the same known, that men might discern, believe, will and doth

wholly oppose and deny any knowledge of, or free will in any man by nature, to that which is truly and spiritually good. And such conceits of free will proceed from want of the right knowledge and belief of the death of *Christ* for all men; And so I shall here only enlarge in the other three things following:

1. What will, or free will in man is.
2. What divers considerations of men yet natural the Scripture affordeth
3. When men are other, and more than natural, and what difference then.

1. The will of man, or mans will, is one of the faculties of the soul of a man; The soul, as I conceive may be comprehended in these three heads, *vi*z.

1. The understanding, or minde of a man; by which he knoweth, discerneth, and judgeth of things, good or bad, true or false, real or imaginarie, and so inventeth, or inferreth, all which may be called Reason.

2. The will of a man, that is his bent, and inclination, leading to elect and chuse, or to reject and refuse, with purpose, and resolution, approving, or condemning according to the judgement of the minde concerning things, good, or bad.

3. The affections of love, joy, desire, &c. Which in a right tempered soul follow the verdict of the understanding, and so the choise, or rejection of the will; But if the appetite, and sensual part get victory over the affections and so lead the will, the soul is in a distemper, and it is a troublesome evil like that, *Prov.* 30. 22, 23.

So that without these three, there is not as I conceive a whole soul, the will being as I conceive the middle part, to be governed by the understanding, and to govern the affections, that all may agree in one; now the freedom of the will is, that liberty and freeness it hath in it self above any discoveries, objects,

jects, and proffers to incline to or from, to chuse or reject, according to what the understanding discerneth, good, or bad without any force, or violence, to constrain it one way or other, without any necessitating enforcement, or band withholding; but onely as that seen in the object, and approved or disapproved by the judgement doth move, and so far is, the will free ended; and so the heart, and minde make free and willing; and such a free, ready & unconstrained will, or willingness is free will indeed, and so far the will is free in it self, and so accounted in Scripture-language also *Exod.* 25.2. and 35.5, 21, 22. 29. 2 *Cor.* 8.3, 12.

Yet here is to be noted; that discovery of objects, giving forth of commands, and directions, layeth no constraint, or hindereth; but that the will of it self inclining is still free, and so accounted in the Scripture, *Lev.* 1.3. and 19.5. and 21.19, 26. Nor doth want of power to do, or avoid, and so accomplish according to the purpose, inclination, and choice of the will, hinder the freedom of the will; But that the will may be free, and freely willing; when yet there is not power to do, or attain that which is willed, *Matth.* 26.41. *Joh.* 21.18. *Rom.* 7.18. So that freedom of will is one thing, and power of doing another; and so let us hold close to our business in minding what is free will, and in what sense the will is said to be free, whether in things that are lawfull, or unlawfull, good or bad; that we mistake not freedom here for liberty, or Authority given of God, for he gives none to evil, nor for power of acting, which is another thing; But for that freedom from constraint, or necessity, In which the will, as it is a will doth, or may incline, and chuse, or reject: more need not be said of the will what it is.

2. But now it is meet to ponder, and rightly to conceive of man according to the divers, and manifold considerations given us of him by the Scripture; of which I shall point out

five considerations of man, as yet a natural man, and they are these.

1. As God made him in his creation of him, when he made all men in one publick man, whom also he made male and female, and called their names *Adam*.

2. As man by eating the forbidden fruit, in sinning made himself.

3. As man through the propitiation made by *Jesus Christ* the second publick man, hath his natural life a time preserved, and mercies extended.

4. As by the virtue of the death, sacrifice, and mediation of *Jesus Christ*, man hath some light, understanding, and disposition given unto him, by *Jesus Christ*.

5. As *Jesus Christ* doth by his Spirit, with some supernatural light, and motion, at some seasons visit a man, and touch his heart, striving with him: and in all these considerations, we have several things to acknowledge about the will of man, and the freedom of it.

1. In the first consideration, we finde God made man upright, even in his soul according to his own Image, in righteousness, and holiness, *Ecles. 7. 29. Gen. 1. 26. Col. 3. 10. Eph. 4. 24.*

Then was man indeed a living soul, and in honour, and had his understanding clear to discern the minde of God, in what appertained to man, and his will free, and at liberty in it self (though by the command of God bound to the best) to chuse one way, or other; and his affections suitable, no sober man that I know denying; and so, and then man had freedom of will, to that which was natural good, and to that which was morally good, and to that which was spiritually good, and all had the same in him, as in a Root out of which they were to spring, and as in a publick man that stood in their room, else they could not have lost it in his fall, and loss.

But for those things that are since mans fall called in Scripture

ture supernatural, and spiritual good, as the spiritual man; the Lord from heaven, the quickning spirit, life from the dead; remission of sins through the blood of the Son of God, enjoying his righteousness, union with him, and conformity to him in death, and resurrection, in his holiness, privileges, and glory, these things were unknown to the first *Adam* in his Innocency; nor could they stand, or be in that first estate he was in; these being no part, nor privilege of the first creation, that is now old; but a new creation of things belonging to the second and spiritual man; *1. Cor. 15. 45.* So that of these heavenly, supernatural, and spiritual good things, as they were not known, so there could be in man no will, much less free will to them, and so *Adam*, not having it could not loose it; nor could we loose such free will in his fall, as we never had in him in his standing; so that thus far I hope none will say, we magnifie the nature of man; For that freedom he had in his will, to natural, moral, and spiritual good, was not deserved, nor acquired by him; but freely given, and wrought in him by God, whose the praise is; But that which is indeed freedom of will, to that which is supernatural, and spiritual good, he had not; and the knowledge of this will help to understand that which follows.

2. In the second consideration, as man by his abuse of free will, did in his transgression make himself; he not abiding a night in honour, became like the beast that perisheth, *Psal. 49. 12, 20.* His soul was not annihilated, no more than his body; but his understanding, will, and affections he had still; but the Image of God therein, the uprightness and holiness thereof was lost; and many evil inventions, found by him and us, all in him; *Eccles. 7. 29.* Yea, he and we as far as could be in a publick one did in him become sinfull, and guilty of death, and by virtue of Gods sentence condemned, and in that respect dead, *Rom. 5. 12, 18.* And by nature, and according to this consideration,
such

such we come forth from him : *Rom. 5. 19.* So that all men by nature, and as considered in *Adam*, and as come forth from him, in respect of all we receive from him, and so are, and have by nature, are all ungodly sinners, enemies to God, void of judgement in that which was truly good, and therefore destitute of will, much more of freedom of will to it; yea, dead in trespasses and sins; *Rom. 3. 9, 19* and *5. 6.* and *6. Eph. 2. 1, 2.* And they that rightly believe *Iesus Christ* to have dyed for all do therein, and therewith believe all to have been thus dead; *2 Cor 5. 14.* And therefore, in respect of any thing by nature, or from *Adam* wholly destitute of any freedom of will, to that which is truly good much more destitute of any free will, to that which is supernatural and spiritual good, which nature never had in the first *Adam*, nor can have but by some higher, and more glorious grace, than was conferred on him in his first estate; So that sure in affirming this, is no exaltation of nature, and such as talk of free will, to that is truly and spiritually good in men by nature, must have it in man thus considered, or not at all.

Object. But here I fear some, that with many words cry down free will in man to good by nature, will yet be offended at me as abusing nature too much, and object against me that in *Rom 2. 14, 15.* That the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law; &c. And shew the work, or effect of the Law written in their heart; where if by nature they mean the nature of man, as from *Adam*; and by the work of the Law written, they mean the Law it self as some do, and the bringing it in for such an end, would argue such a sense to be meant: hen and so to this Objection I answer.

Answer. Though I reverence their learning and godliness, yet I receive not their sense of this place, because I finde the word nature otherwise used sometime, than for the nature of man; and the nature of man in another consideration also than
hitherto

hitherto set forth; And I finde a great difference between the law and the work, or effect of the law in the heart; and the taking the words here in such a sense, would contradict many, plain sayings of Scripture For those that understand not, Do no good, are ungodly, and enemies to God, and by nature dead in trespasses, and sins, have not the holy and righteous law written in their hearts; nor do freely by their own nature the things contained in the law, which if they had, and did, then had they free will indeed by nature; yea, and which is more freedom, and power of doing also; and this is strange, that such as cry down free will in words and accuse others to hold it, should by their own interpretations in doctrine so highly avouch, and teach it.

But it is clear enough, if the Apostles business, and scope from chap. 1. 16. to this chap. 2. 16. be well viewed, and understood: which was to set forth the goodness of God according to Gospel testimonie, and the means he used for men to to know it; that believing they might be justified and sanctified by his grace; and the equity of his proceedings against those that willingly disobey against goodness so made known about making forth his knowledge, he tells us of two mediums or books; the book of creatures; God in and by natural things created, and ordered by him manifesting his power, goodness, &c. and giving them in some measure to know, and calling and moving to repentance, *Rom.* 1. 19, 20, 21. and 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. and God teaching by these mediums; it is in respect of the instruments used, called the teaching of nature, or natures teaching: and the other is the book of Scriptures, which was not by nature, or natural mediums, but by a spiritual revelation from God; so the law to and by *Moses*; and the Prophecies; and the Gospel as now come forth; *Rom.* 1. 16, 17. which to whomsoever it comes, it brings more clear revelation of the minde of God than can be seen in nature, or those visible works of God in

creation, and providence ; and it is not the enjoyment of greater, or lesser means , but the yeilding up thereto , according to the light therein vouchsafed , be it more, or less, in which goodness is received : again if we minde the Scripture , and man in the first consideration, we shall finde, that man in his innocency had the Law , that is the knowledge , and love of God , and man writ in his heart ; but sinning he lost this , and became as the beasts in that respect. Yet though man lost his uprightness, God and his Law lost not his authoriy ; man by the Law was as much obliged still to know and love God and his neighbour for the grace he had conferred on him by creation , &c. And such the force, power , and authority of God in this Law , that it entered into the heart of man, convincing him , as bound to it, and that it was his duty to adore God, and love man; though he had neither light , nor strength , nor will to either ; yet according to what he conceived himself to do right , or wrong; his conscience , or thoughts within would excuse , or accuse; and such an effect, or work of the Law, is more, or less in every mans conscience, till he by custom of sinning, and hardning his heart be seared, & so past feeling, *Rom. 2. 5. Ephes. 4. 18.* so that in all this is no such commendation of the nature of man that he hath the Law writ in his heart, and so by nature doth the things of the Law , the contrary being largely testified in the first chapter, and in the beginning of this : But now for our understanding what that Doing the things of the Law by that light extended by nature or natural mediums , even by such as have no distinct revelation of *Christ* is , which is here spoken of. It is needfull that we first receive the Gospel-testimonie ; that *Christ* dyed for all men, and extends by virtue of his death some light to all, and so consider man in some other consideration , than as fallen in the first *Adam* ; namely as redeemed in the second, and as mercies and means are extended by and through that second publick man, even *Iesus Christ* : and those means made effectual

effectual in him also by *Jesus Christ* : though for want of the Gospel, and spiritual revelation he have no distinct knowledge of this *Jesus Christ* : through whom he receiveth all this, and by whom he is now more accepted of God than such as enjoy those greater and spiritual means that give the distinct knowledge of *Christ* : and are not prevailed with thereby, as is to be seen in the example of *Cornelius*, *Acts*. 10. 1, 4, 31, 34, 35. And the following part of this whole chapter, *Rom*. 2. So that in all this the grace of God shewn in greater, or smaller means, by spiritual, or natural mediums is magnified; but the nature of man, & that which of himself as *Adams* Son he willeth, and Doth, is reprov'd, and abas'd, as is evident throughout chapter. 1. and 2. and 3.

3. But now in the third consideration of man, as *Christ* : the second and publick man hath in his stead, and for his sins dyed and so wrought a redemption, and made a peace for him; and by virtue thereof doth preserve his life for a time, and in that time extendeth mercies and means to him that he might repent, *Rom*. 2. 4. and seek him; *Acts*. 17. 27. and live to him, 2 *Cor*. 5. 15. and so participate of the redemption & peace. Here in this consideration of man; as his soul, and body is preserved in the natural life by *Christ* : *Psal*. 75. 3. *Col*. 1. 16, 17. *John* 1. 4, 5. We have something else to consider about the will in man, being one of the faculties of the soul, of the soul so preserved: For man in the former consideration was so fallen and dead, that he was so shut out, that there was no liberty to him for any good to chuse, nor yet for evil to chuse or refuse; for he was necessitated to it, and so his will wholly imbondaged, but now through this redemption wrought by *Christ* : and grace given by God in him, and manifested through him; that necessity of perishing, and impossibility of being saved; that which stood cross against man in the mid-way between God and man, is removed, and that which held man captive is by *Christ* captived, *Col*. 2. 14. *Ephes*. 2. 13, 16. and 4. 8. and here is remission of sins, and

eternal life prepared for men, and given by God in *Christ* : that in receiving him men might receive it , and this set forth in the Gospel , that men might chuse life , *Joh. 3. 14, 15. Act. 13, 38, 39. Joh. 5. 11, 12.* So that now the winter is past ; and here is good, spiritual good, to be chosen , and liberty from God to chuse the same ; *Deut. 30. 19. Joh. 6. 27, 29.* but yet nature blinded cannot see ; and so the will is not moved nor free to chuse this spiritual good , unless some supernatural light be given in-to it, *Joh. 1. 4, 5.* but now in natural things, suitable to the good, and well-being of the natural life which is preserved by *Christ*, the will is also herein so preserved by *Christ* : as there is some freedom in it touching natural things ; and here I may say ; the will hath as much power, or freedom to chuse, or refuse, as the man hath light , or understanding to discern what is good, or evil in things tending to the natural life ; and this I gather from that change of expreffion , where knowledge , and knowing to chuse , or refuse are put one for another , *Isa. 8. 4.* with *Isa. 7. 16.* and so in , and about things and actions natural , and humane , for the preservation , safety and well-being of the natural life, and suitable profits, pleasures, and honours, with that contrary thereto ; according to that which the understanding and minde of a man, judgeth to be good or bad, best or worst, the will of the natural man is free , and doth freely chuse , or refuse ; *Gen. 6. 2. and 11. 3, 6. and 13. 9, 10, 11.* Although through a deluded judgement ; he may be mistaken in his choise, *Act. 27. 11, 12, 13.* yea, and though he want power to attain , and do, or to avoid all that he chuseth , or refuseth ; which may befall in this to spiritual men also , *Joh. 21. 18.* so that in fallen man that is yet natural , and of himself inclined , and imbondaged to his own ruine and harm ; (he is yet through the grace of God by *Christ* , so preserved , that there is such a freedom in his will about things natural, as is said the holding of which perswasion attributeth nothing to the exaltation of nature , no worth , no desert,

desert, no power for good ; but abaseth it, and magnifieth the grace, and power of God in *Christ* ; to such weak unworthy ones , to whom in their distress he also so speaketh, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee , *Matth. 10. 31.* yet is this freedom of will many ways abused by natural men to their harm.

1. Some not knowing the grace of God through *Christ* : that dyed for them and bought them, and so preserveth this freedom of will in them, as they count their tongues their own, *Psal. 12. 4.* so their will , and this liberty , and freedom they finde in it to be of themselves , and so what they attain of things they chuse and pursue , tending to furnish their natural life , they attribute to themselves ; and so sacrifice to their own wisdom, choise, endeavours, &c. And make idols thereof, which if they knew, and believed the death of *Christ* , for all, with the ends and virtues thereof, they would not do, *Ezek. 28. 2, 6, 17. Hab. 1. 15, 16.* An evil that God warns his people to beware of , *Deut 8. 11, 12. 14, 17. Jer. 9. 23.*

2. Some through the same Ignorance, and unbelief, yet finding this liberty of will , not knowing whose gift it is , and to what end given, do yet in self-love, and desire of riches and honour, chuse that which to them appeareth the best ; and so chuse a sober, and temperate use of the creatures, and a civil and modest behaviour in converse with men about them, and then in a secret hypocrisie pretend this temperance , sobriety, &c. to be for God, and to him, and so challenge , and hope for heaven thereby, agrievous , and dangerous deceit , and of as wofull an issue, *Prov. 14. 12. and 16. 25. and 21. 2. and 30. 12.* And this reprov'd in Gods people , *Zach. 7. 5, 6.*

3. Some through folly , setting the servant to rule, suffering their appetite, and sense to command their will , do freely chuse those worst things , and ways by which they lay Bars , and Blocks in the way of their own conversion ; and so fore-stall themselves from hearkning to better offers, when tendered , and

so.

so provoke God to leave them to such folly as is folly in the eyes of natural men; as to hire, or buy a farm before they see it, *Luke 14. 18.*

Yet this freedom of will given by *Christ*, will serve to leave men that so abuse it without excuse, seeing they were not necessitated to chuse the worst, but did it freely without constraint, and such as use it, but as they may; do avoid many rubs, and blocks from being in the way of their conversion; and yet in all this is no free will to that which is spiritually good; nor any exalting of the nature of man; but the grace of God for that freedom that is given.

4. But to proceed farther: to consider man according to the fourth consideration, *viz.* As by virtue of the death, sacrifice, and mediation of *Iesus Christ*; there is by him some light, understanding, and disposition given into the soul, the minde, will, and affections of man; yea every man that cometh into the world.

But because this will not be believed by some; but is questioned, and denyed, it is much to produce some instances of Scripture, where the Spirit of truth affirmeth the same; that it may appear unquestionably true, *Iohn 1. 4, 5, 9.* *Iesus Christ* is said, to have life in him, and that life in him to be the light of men (that whence issues that discoverie of the knowledge of the goodness of God, and that life, mercy, &c. which men have, and might further enjoy) and the light shineth (note it, not onely to, but) in darkness (in the blind understandings, and mindes of men, and their ways) and the darkness comprehendeth it not (but then it follows that more means is used, and then *vers. 9.* He was the true light (namely from the beginning, as still he is, the light of the world, *Iohn 8. 12*) which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and, what this light is, see, *Prov. 20. 27.* The spirit of man is the candle (or lamp) of the Lord (which he hath given him, and set up and lighted in his heart) searching (and so discovering)

vering) all the inward parts of the belly, & this also is avouched by good *Elishu*, *Job. 32.8.* there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding: and that this spirit, or light, and inclination, though in the soul, is neither the soul nor the body of man as from *Adam*, but some infusion by the means of *Christ*: appeareth, in that it is said to be given of God, that men by it might inquire after, and discern the goodness of God their maker, *Job. 35. 10, 11.* and also that it is exprest as a third thing distinct from soul and body, *Luke 1. 46, 47. 1 Thes. 5. 23.* And let men call this what they please it is such a light understanding, and disposition, as in which men are said to have eyes to see, and ears to hear, so as they might discern between that which is morally good, and morally evil, and discern many of the attributes of God, and much of his minde in his works, and word; yea and that testimony of his Son being the Saviour of the world, when it is brought to them if they close not the eyes, & eares given them, and refuse to use them to the end for which they were given them and that is it they are reprov'd for, as is clear *Gal. 3. 1. Acts 28, 27 Jer. 5. 21. Ezek. 22. 26.* And hereby it is; that many natural men have so discerned, the being and attributes of God, in his works, and have been so inclined to many moral good things, and disapproved moral evils; which though some of good esteem calls the Reliques of Gods Image left in *Adam* after the fall, and therein unwittingly magnifie nature; and ascribe some light and freedom of will to it, and deny man to be dead in sin by the fall: yet the truth is, those things are the fruit of that life in *Christ*, for men, and by him given in to them, *John. 1. 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10.*

So that as man is thus considered he hath from *Christ* such light or spirit, as if heeded, and suffered would make his will free to moral good things, *Exod. 35. 3, 21, 26.* So as in this respect, there is given by *Christ* so much freedom as the will is not constrained,

strained ; but might chuse the best, in respect of moral good , or evil presented unto it and in respect of attending to , or with. drawing from the Gospel , which attended to , would work a better freedom, whence in their not so chusing , they are charged , (not with a necessitous turning aside, but) to have chosen their own ways , and that which God delighted not in, and 65. 12. and 66. 3, 4. *Prov.* 1. 29, 31. And all this is no affirmation of free will in man by nature to that which is supernaturally, and spiritually good ; for that it yet is not , nor of it self can be , without some farther grace than here mentioned , though in right use of this shewn, even that might be met withall, *Prov.* 8. 32, 36. But this serveth still , to abase mans nature as fallen, and to magnifie the grace of God in *Christ* ; and to aggravate the sinfulness of evil chusers of their own ways ; yet this freedom of will, though graciously given by *Christ*, to men for their good, is by many divers ways abused to their greater harm, for.

1. Some even when God appears, and the knowledge of God is tendered , and they discern the same , right , and good , and might chuse to behold the light, and attend the means of knowledge tendered , in which they should meet with blessing ; yet because it reproveth , and calleth off from some Idolatry , or uncleanness , or worldly lusts , which they exceedingly love, they without constraint do freely refuse, to hearken to such instructions, and yield to such acts of worship, and justice, mercy and sobriety , as would hinder the satisfying of those lusts , and as freely chuse the contrary which they might have refused, but would not , and in this their evil choise , they say to the Almighty , Depart from us we will not the knowledge of thy ways ; whence these are said, to be the wicked indeed, *Phil.* 3. 18, 19. 2 *Tim.* 3. 4. *Jab.* 21. 14, 15.

2. Some when light and truth is extended , discovering the vanity of Idols, and false worship, and mens doctrines and ways, and the goodness of truth , so as they begin to see what is right, and

and good, and like it, as good to be followed; yet because they love peace to the flesh, and the approbation of man in authority, and in fame for learning, and devotion; they not by any necessity or constraint, but willingly stick to their commands and doctrines, and refuse to embrace the truth, that would endanger to their displeasure and reproach, *Hos. 5. 3, 4, 9, 11. John 5. 44. and 12. 42, 43.* whence that *Isa. 51. 12, 13.* Neither will this *Plea* help them, or be found true; their wills were so chained, they could not chuse to accept the better part in this; they were for want of liberty, and freedom of will necessitated to chuse the worse part herein, and whoever help them with this *Plea*, God will reprove it, *Isai 5. 1, 4. Mic. 2. 7.*

3. Some there are, that for want of the right knowledge of *Christ*, having dyed for all, and the ends, and virtues of his death stoop not to come in at that door, wherein they will be found no better than others, and chuse not that efficacie of the death of *Christ*, that they might be quickned by him; yet make some use though a wrong one of this liberty, and freedom of will given them by *Christ*, and that is this; that being convinced of sin, and their guiltiness of it by the Law, and the wages to be death, and so terrified by the Law, with the apprehensions of Gods anger and judgement, and so of hell, and believing the Law to be holy, just, and good, as indeed it is; they set themselves to the Law, and chuse to work sorrow on their hearts for their sins, and so to leave them, and to learn the knowledge of those righteous affections, and services commanded by the Law hereby to get the righteousness of God, and as by use, and custom, they attain to some inward frames, and promptness in duties; they would from thence conclude themselves alive to God, but finding wants, they will look to *Christ*, as one that dyed for such; that so what is wanting in them, may be made up by him; and being come to this, they trust, there are *Christs*; they have faith, they are righteous, and have some

free-will to that which is supernatural and spiritual good, but in this they are not wise, but farther off & unjustified still, *2 Cor.* 10. 7, 11, 12, 13. *Luke* 18. 11. *Rom.* 7. 9. and 9. 33. and 10. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Job* 9. 30, 33. And yet in this is something that is worse, for they yet not knowing that which is indeed supernatural and spiritual good, and so having as yet no freedom of will to chuse that. But onely this freedom forementioned to that is morally good, and all the zeal, and exercise being an act of their will though helped by that freedom in it given by *Christ* to men; yet this now they call, an act of supernatural grace, and say, it is a begun freedom of will to that which is spiritually good; and that it was wrought in them by the free grace and the almighty, and unresistable power of God, without which they say, they could not have had it. And they acknowledge it, the work of his grace, as did the Pharisee; *Luke* 18. 11. And of this act, and fruit of their will, they make a great Idol, and mysteriously worship it, for from hence they fetch their knowledge, and on this they build their faith and hope, that they are elect, that *Christ* dyed for them; that *Christ* is theirs, and they his, that the promises belong to them and that they shall have eternal life, and can never fall away; & though they think and to others say, *Christ* is their foundation, yet the truth is, the first and bottom matter is the foundation, and that to them is this act produced by their will, without which they know not whether *Christ* dyed for them or no; so that they build that perswasion hereon also; and hence is their assurance, &c. raised; though every whit as much deceived as they, *Prov.* 30. 12. *Luke* 18. 11. *Rev.* 3. 17, 18. *2 Cor.* 10. 12. And as high-thoughted of themselves as they, *Prov.* 30. 13. *Isai* 65. 5.

Yet do they blinde themselves and others from discerning this, by earnest, and zealous crying down all free-will in man to any such good as they have, as if there be any, it must needs be by nature; and so as persuing others as magnifiers of nature,

ture, and holding man hath free-will to that is spiritually good, therefore you may be sure they are far from any such thing: and yet all this while, they have no more but that freedom of will that is by *Christ*, given to all men, though not so to work with, and build on, the Lord help such as are snared with it out of this mysterious Deceit, that they may not be as those, *Prov.* 30. 12, 13. or he, *Luke* 18. 11. Lamentable it is, that so good, and gracious a gift given to man, should be so abused, but it will leave at last the abusers excuseless.

5. But I will now add, the last consideration of the natural man, and that is as *Jesus Christ* by the virtue of his death, sacrifice, and mediation, doth by his spirit in, and according to the Gospel, visit and move the heart with some supernatural light, and motion at some seasons striving with him; that there are such seasons of gracious visitations, and especially where the Gospel is plainly preached (& I need not in our Nation stretch my Assertion any farther) is evident; for the plain preaching of the Gospel is it self a gracious visitation to a people, and the mean, yea the choise, if not the onely outward mean to enlighten mens mindes in, & make their wills free to chuse spiritual good things, *Luke* 1. 68, 78, 79. and 19. 42, 44. And *Christ* by his spirit is graciously present in such ministration of the Gospel, *Prov.* 9. 1, 6. *Matth.* 28. 20. whence it is called, a ministration of life, spirit, and righteousness, *2 Cor.* 3. 7, 8, 9. And yet moreover at some seasons more than others, and sometime to one, and sometime to another he doth more clearly, and forcibly visit with some supernatural light and motion, discovering his goodness to the heart, and moving it with convincement and allurements, so striving with them by his spirit, as appears, *Rev.* 3. 20. *1 Pet.* 2. 12. *John* 16. 8, 13. And in such seasons, he is making the will free, laying grace and life before it, moving with loving allurements, so as they might be free to chuse, and have then an opportunitie to receive that freedom, yea in one season or

other, before he leave striving with them; he takes off the yoke of thralldom, that there is so much freedom given to the will, (I say not that they shall necessarily, & by constraint, but that) they might in that season, while his presence is so with them even chuse life; yea spiritual good things, though many undervaluing it do not, as is evident, *Hof. 11. 4. Ezek. 24. 13. Isa. 5. 1, 4.* I say not, this freedom wrought in the will of the natural man is abiding, or dwelling in him, but onely that it is given into his will at and in such a season of visitation; and yet that this mercy of God given in such seasons is by many diversly abused is too evident.

1. By some in a willing withdrawing, and turning aside after such knowledge, and operations of truth given; a fearfull, and dangerous evil, *Hof. 11. 1, 4, 7. Ezek. 24. 13. Prov. 1. 24.*

2. By others, though not prevailed with to receive the love of the truth, to save, renew, and cleanse them yet lifting up themselves to high conceits of themselves as more excellent than others because of such visits, shines, and motions, and even on that ground also boasting of their enjoyments of free grace, and peculiar favour; a dangerous evil, *Prov. 30. 13. Jude 5. 6. 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.* the Lord give such timely repentance.

3. Yet lastly that we may fully, and rightly understand this business, there is one thing more to be considered, namely, how long any is to be reckoned in the number of natural men; and that according to Scripture account is; untill, by the grace of God in *Christ* discovered, they be brought in to believe in *Jesus Christ*; and then they are something else, and better than meer natural men, or till for persisting in resisting this grace they be left, and so given up, and reprobated of God, and then they be something else, and worse than meer natural men; the first of these have a begun freedom of will not onely to chuse spiritual good things, for that they have already, but also to pursue, abide in and follow after the same, which no meer natural

tural man hath ; and the latter have lost that freedom they have before given them to moral good things, and attention to mediums for spiritual good , being void of judgement therein : and till men become one of these two sorts, they, even all men besides, both rich and poor, wise and simple, learned and unlearned, in offices ecclesiastical or civil, and out of office, within or without the pale of the profest Church; Jews or Gentiles, civil or deboyft , idolatrous , superstitious , devout or profane, and scoffers, meek or furious, chaste or unchaste, liberal or covetous, &c. They are all of them natural, and but natural men, untill as is said.

1. That by the love , or grace of God in *Christ* , that dyed for sinners, discerned, and believed, they be brought to deny, and disown themselves, their own sins, purposes, and ways, so as they believe on God in *Christ* , therein ; accepting this grace to save, comfort, renew, and guide them, the bent of their heart being set to depend on God, to enjoy, honour , and please him; waiting on him for preservation, and eternal life , these though men, and in a sense natural men still, *Acts*. 14. 15. yet also indeed and in truth , they are something else, more and better than natural men, even the Sons of God by faith, *Gal*. 3. 26. Born of God, *John* 1. 12, 13. of water, and the spirit, *John* 3. 3, 5. By the grace, and spirit of God, in and by *Christ*, *Rom*. 5. 6, 8, 10. *Tir*. 3. 4, 5, 6. *1 Pet*. 1. 21. And so all that by the freeness of Gods love appearing in the death of *Christ* are brought to believe in *Christ*, and so have him , by his Word, and Spirit abiding in them, and they by faith, and love abiding in him; these all these, whether babes, strong men, or fathers, all are the sons of God, members of *Christ* ; and in some degree spiritual , yea though by reason of some weakness, and oppositions of flesh, and world, some be more carnal than spiritual, *Rom*. 7. 14. *1 Cor*. 1. 2, 3. So that such believers all and every one of them have not onely such a freedom of will, as that they might chuse that is good,

according to their understanding in things natural and moral, and attention to the outward mediums for spiritual good things and so such a light, or spirit, as God by *Christ* and for his sake giveth to every one that cometh into the world, but they have received an oyntment from the holy One, even the word of grace, & therein the spirit of grace into their spirit, and so have a new heart, a new spirit; and so have not onely that by which attending their will might be made free, or an opportunity in which they might have it, or such a freedom onely in some spiritual visit, that they might chuse life and spiritual good things, but much more; for by the election grace hath made in their hearts they have chosen life and spiritual good things, *Isai* 56. 45. 1 *Thes.* 2. 13. 2 *Thes.* 1. 10. And now have in their heart by the operation of God a begun freedom, not onely to chuse, yea and to will, but even also to do spiritual things, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. And it is behoofull, and gainfull for them to walk out in this grace as they have received, *Col.* 2. 6. *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. And in this freedom they are differenced from all natural men, and much more from them that are worse than natural: namely,

2. Those who by continual lifting up their own understandings thinking to be wise, and preferring their own thoughts, purposes, and lusts, before the receiving, and retaining the knowledge, and teachings of God by nature or Scripture to turn at his reproof, but follow the delusions of Satan, till they have closed their eyes, and stopped their ears, and hardened their hearts, in resisting the spirit, and blotting out the light, which God by *Christ* had given them, and so resisted the truth declared, and the holy Ghost in his visits, and stripes therein, till they be left and given up to Satan, and so reprobated, and given up of God: these, and all, and every of these, though in a sense they be natural men still; yet they are also some thing else, and more, and worse than natural men, even the Sons of *Belial*, of the wicked one, the seed of the Serpent emphatically, the

the reprobate, and wicked indeed, that now cannot believe; *Prov.* 1. 24, 36. *Ezek.* 24. 13. *Fer.* 6. 16, 30. *Gen.* 4. 5, 13. with 1 *John* 3. 12. *Rom.* 1. 18, 28. *John* 12. 38, 40. And these having lost that light they had, & despised the spirit that would have given them more, and for that given up of God, they are not onely destitute of all freedom of will to spiritual but even to moral good; and set with a full resolution in their will to do the works of their father the devil, being void of all right judgement *John* 8. 41, 44. *Rom.* 1. 24, 28. And in this they are differenced not onely from believers, but from all other men, that are reckoned in the number of natural men.

And now having been so large in opening this business; let all this be brought together; let the will be considered, as one of the faculties of the soul; and the freedom, for a libertie, not from a command, or lawfulness, but in it self to chuse the one or the other in things proffered; let the things be considered as distinct, natural, and moral, and spiritual; and of what, and to which is spoken in any affirmation: let the natural man be considered as he was righteous, but is fallen in and through *Adam*, and redemption wrought for him by *Christ*, and some light given him, & in some seasons liberty and opportunity for more: and let those born of God be considered as distinct, and those reprobated as excluded the better part. And then I am perswaded, all that are not prejudicated through envie, and malice will confess that the heartie believing that *Jesus Christ* by the grace of God did dye, and give himself a ransom for all men, and that God so accepted this death of his for all, that he hath exalted him, and made him Lord, and Judge of all, and filled him with all fulness of grace and truth; to bestow; and that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that those that live should not live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again, that *Jesus Christ* is the Saviour of the world, the propitiation for the sins of the whole world;

world; that he is so displayed, and set forth in the Gospel that all men might believe, and that such as do indeed believe on him shall not perish but have everlasting life, this being the foundation of repentance and faith; the door to come in to the knowledge of God and *Christ*; the ground of the faith, and certaintie of the resurrection of the dead, and of the equitie and certaintie of *Christ* his judging all men, and the ground and motive of true love to God and men; that this doctrine, and the belief and preaching of it, will lead no man to magnifie the nature off man as from *Adam*, or to think that any man hath by nature free-will to moral, or spiritual good; yea or that any man that is but natural hath any freedom of will to spiritual good things, much less power to attain, and do; and we that believe thus protest against it.

But this we believe, as we are led to in the belief of this doctrine, namely, That as *Iesus Christ* came into the world to save sinners, and that the world might be saved, *1 Tim* 1. 15. *Iohn* 3. 17. And useth means and sends his Word to that end that men might seek him, repent, and believe, and so be saved, *Acts* 17. 27. *Rom* 2. 4. *Iohn* 1. 7. and 5. 24, 34. *Psal* 78. 5, 6, 7, 8.

So he hath done that for men, and by virtue thereof doth that unto men by which in his operations they might repent and believe, and so be eternally saved, and if they be not, it is not through meer impotencie and necessitie, but their willfullness so far, that their destruction is of themselves, not in or by the weakness or want of any thing done by *Christ*, but by their own willing disobedience, refusal, and evil choise, *Prov* 1. 24, 29, 30. and 9. 12. *Isa* 5. 2, 6. *Ier* 6. 16, 19. *Hos* 13. 9. 2 *Thes* 2. 10, 11. And so from the same doctrine, and these instructions of it we believe as is said.

1. That the natural life of man is by *Christ*, preserved for a time that he might repent.

2. That by *Christ*: some means are used, and some light
blown vouch-

vouchsafed to men for the same end ; tending toward Salvation.

3. That some light disposition or spirit is extended, and given into men , by which they are indued with some discerning that may be called an eye to see, an ear to hear, that so in seeing and hearing they might understand what is naturally, and what morally good , and what of God is declared to them in his works and word about his eternal being , and God-head, his wisdom, power, justice, truth, and his love, and kindness to man-ward, and what he hath done for them, and how he looks, and calls for their return to him , and what in mercie he stands readie to confer upon them in their return ; according to his discoverie they may see ; and with this discerning such a suitable libertie, or freedom in their will is also given them by *Christ*, that they might chuse and see in seeing , and so to view and incline, and chuse to seek, and yield to that which is naturally, and morally good, and to attend that word, and those means in which spiritual good things are declared and tendered to them, and in which attention to them they should meet with that which would inlighen their mindes, and give so much freedom to their wills, as that they might chuse that which is spiritually good , which yet is wanting to them.

4. That *Iesus Christ* , by his Gospel where it comes, and by his Spirit therein, at some seasons, doth even lay meat before them and so far take off the yoke of thralldom that by his operations in such seasons they might chuse life ; and then is this freedom also given them, which because they accept it not, & so use it not in that season to chuse life as they might, it abides not in them, and so they cannot be said to have it, but as coming in that season, and passing , because it was not laid hold on in that season, and well used.

And all this being the free gift of God by virtue of the death of *Christ*, to unworthy men, and a fruit of his love, and kindness to man-ward, it magnifies not at all mans nature, as in and from

Adam, nor affordeth any praise to man; but sets forth still the glory of the rich grace, and bounty of God to unworthy man, and how they are still more obliged to God for this helpfulness afforded, and to *Christ* the spiritual man, by virtue of whose death and sacrifice, this also is extended, being a fruit thereof, and it serves much more to abase corrupt and fallen man, and to aggravate his sin and folly, that being in miserie, and life tendered him by a Redeemer, and such help given him that he might incline to hear, and attend to the means he useth, who would save him eternally, and yet men willingly to close, or refuse to use the eye he hath given them, and to chuse to follow lying vanities, and so forsake their own mercies, rejecting the Lord of life, Oh, great ingratitude, and inexcusable follie.

As for the freedom of will in unfeigned believers, though it be but in part, yet confessed by us all that believe in *Christ*, I will here say no more to that, and for them that for willing resisting the Spirit till they be given up of God and reprobated; that they are hardened, and totally destitute of any freedom of will, or possibilitie thereto in things truly and spiritually good, I suppose there is in this no difference among us that believe in *Christ*.

But about natural men, not yet born from above, nor wholly overcome by Satan and so given up, and reprobated by God; but yet in their natural estate; of these is the question, and concerning these, the question is not of free-will to God by nature, or as we come of *Adam*, for that is denied by us all that believe in *Christ*; nor is the question of free-will in man to things supernaturally and spiritually good; for that is denied to be in, or have any abiding in natural men, while they remain onely natural; but the question is, of a freedom procured, and given into the will of man by *Iesus Christ*, in which so much liberty is given into the will of man, that according to the declarations, and tenders made in things naturally and morally good,

good, and the declaration of Gods love to mankinde, in his works, and in his word, the mediums to discover supernatural and spiritual good things when attended to, and believed; he might incline to, and chuse to minde, attend to, and imbrace such natural and moral good, and such outward mediums for spiritual good as are set before him, in which is attendance to that better freedom, which in such attention should be met with; of this and this onely is the question, and the affirmative I have testified to, in such a sense and so far as is affirmed in the four last mentioned particulars: and I suppose fully and clearly proved in the Scriptures fore-cited in the three last of the five considerations of the natural man: And yet for more satisfaction I will instance proofs more distinctly.

I *Proof.* The Apostle professeth that the word of faith which he preached, and that which the righteousness of faith saith, and which *Moses* spake, is the word that is nigh thee in thy mouth, and in thy heart, and that nighness, and being in thee, the testimonie of the word it self: now this word which they preached was neither *Adam*, nor *Adam*-like, and natural things, nor a Law of works, but the word made flesh, the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and remission of sins, and life in him, to be received by believing, and testified by confession; and this word saith he, is not so far out of sight and reach but it is very nigh thee in thy heart (that thou maiest believe) In thy mouth that thou maiest confesse, as is evident; compare *Rom.* 10. 4, 10. with *Dent.* 30. 11, 15. And upon this ground, *Moses* professeth to have set life before them, and exhorts them to chuse life, *verse.* 15, 19. Surely this testimonie is true, in some plain and full sense; without wresting dominion, or addition, and it cannot hold forth less than what is before affirmed in the last four fore-mentioned particulars.

To take it in such a fantastical sense as if the personal body of *Christ* were in us, and dying, rising and ascending in us, is

contrary to the whole testimonie of Scripture and the foundation of our faith, and the drift of the place it self.

To take Nigh and In for his spiritual in-being in the hearts of believers by his word and Spirit, and the riches of the mysterie in forgiveness, righteousness, &c. By and in which manner, he is in believers the hope of glorie, is against Scripture, which makes that peculiar to believers, and against the place it self, which affirms this nighness, not because, but that men might believe; Yet sure a truth there is in the affirmation, and that in a full, and plain sense, whether:

1. We take [in] for, for, as it will well bear and signifie, and is sometime so used, yet then the first word Nigh implies a redemption for man, and made known and fit, and this implies good will to him, and so for him, and he so far made capable that he might so attend that he might believe, or:

2. If we take [In] for in, or within, as being added to Nigh, it seems to be taken, then we must take [In] for such a being in as may be in an unbeliever that he might believe; and that can be no less than by virtue of his propitiation made, and mediation continued, extending such mercie and light into men; as through him they live, and move, and have understanding above the beasts; and so an eye to discern, and such motion in their will, that upon his tenders of life in the means they might chuse to behold and attend to him in them; and then though they have no power to save themselves, yet he would save them, *Isai 45. 22.*

And both these senses are true, and answer to the words fully and plainly, and less than both these cannot be taken, without injurie to the words: and he that denieth this preacheth not the Gospel the Apostle preached, but runs at an uncertaint; and this holds forth as much as I have affirmed.

2. *Proof.* It is affirmed plainly in the Scripture, that *Jesus Christ* lighteth every man that cometh into the world, *John 1. 9.* and so that there is a spirit in man, &c. *Prov. 20. 27. Job 32.*

8. and 35. 10, 11. and that they have eyes, and ears that they might see, and hear, though they refuse in seeing to see, &c. the wonders in the works and word of God, *Jer.* 5. 21. as is before shewn; and this is as much as I have affirmed.

3. *Proof.* The Lord calleth upon men to look to him, to hear his voice, to understand, to turn at his reproof, to repent, to believe, to chuse life, &c. *Isai* 42. 1. and 45. 22. *Prov.* 8. 4, 7. and 1. 23. *Acts* 2. 38. and 16. 31. *Dent.* 30. 15, 19. If any say that such exhortations imply not power in the exhorted to turn, &c. I answer, I say not that it doth; but implies power and will in the exhorter, he being the Lord, and a capacity given by him to the exhorted, to hear and see, and understand, and so to attend and incline, which if they do, according to what they may by his gift, he will add more, and save as his word assures: a wicked servant he is that saith, the Lord gathers where he hath not sown, &c. If any say, they say not God doth so, for he gave them power in *Adam*, which they have lost, and he may justly require that of them he once gave them power for: I answer, he gave power to *Adam*, to as much as the Law of ten words requires; and that power he lost; and this Law serves to discover sin, and sentence to death, which use was not for *Adam* in his innocency; and I hope such as know the Gospel, know that *Christ* will judge according to it, himself having been judged for us according to the Law, but the power to acknowledge sin, repent, and believe in *Christ*, and so chuse life, that way was not in *Adam* in his innocencie, and so not lost by him, and so as the first power men never had in themselves, though in *Adam*; so this they never had in him; and if God graciously give not forth some power, in which men might look to, and receive his power, he should require of men absolute impossibilities, and then his yoke were not easie, but in Gospel declarations he gives that by which men might hear, the end of his declaring & calling being that men might repent and be saved;

John 5. 24, and 34. which will evidence as much as I have affirmed.

4. *Proof.* God every way by his word, cleares himself from being the cause of mens destructions, either in his will or pleasure taking in their death, *Ezek.* 33. 11. or tempting them to evil, *Jam.* 1. 12. or in want of any means used for their good that may stand with his wisdom and holiness, and expresseth his heart for their conversion, and appealeth to their conscience, what could have been done more that he hath not done, *Isai* 5. 2, 6. which had been easily answered, if he had not done as much for, and in them, as I have affirmed.

5. *Proof.* God that is mercifull, wise, and holy, will not look for that in his creatures for which he never gave them any power or fitness, or means by which it might be brought about; he would not look down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if they did understand, &c. If he had done nothing for them by which they might understand, &c. *Psal.* 4. 2, 3. nor would he look for fruits if he had not done that by which fruits might have been brought forth, *Isai* 5. 3, 4. which could be no less than I have affirmed.

6. *Proof.* God in convincing, reproving, and condemning men as sinners in this respect chargeth them neither with *Adams* fall, nor weakness, and inability in that sense, but with willfulness, and gross neglect or rejecting his word, *Prov.* 1. 24, 29, 30. *Ezek.* 24. 13. And saith not, they were chained in, or necessitated to, but chose their own ways, *Isai* 66. 3. And are in this foolish, having eyes and see not, *Jer.* 5. 21. which argues as much as I have affirmed.

7. *Proof.* The convinced, that are convinced by the holy Ghost, shall experiment and acknowledge as much, when they shall see it their sin, that they have not believed in *Christ*, which could not be, if there were nothing in *Christ*; for them to believe in him for, nor that done by *Christ*, to them, by which they might

might have believed, *John 16.8,9.* which proves as much as I have affirmed.

8. *Proof.* The complaint or reproof of, or lamentation for the fool, *Prov. 17.16.* wherefore is there a price put in the hand of a fool, seeing he hath no heart. There is a price and the price is put in his hand, and he values and loves it not, and herein he is a fool; not that he hath no eyes, or ears, or hand, and so cannot see, or hear, or receive; but that he having these neglects to use them, when so good occasion is given, not that there is no price for him, or that it is far out of his reach, but the price is put in his hand, and he wants wisdom, or a heart to set such price on it as to part with his lust, &c. For it is this is folly, *Fer. 5.21. Hos. 11.3,4,7.* And this also carries forth as much as I have affirmed.

9. *Proof.* And to come to right reason, subdued to, and ordered by the word of God, this affirmed tends more to the glory of God and the abasement, and good of men, than that opinion that denieth this; let them be weighed together.

That all the preservation of mans life is by virtue of the death of *Christ*; and that God hath provided life for them in *Christ*, and that he useth means to bring them to the knowledge of it; and that he gives them an understanding that they might discern his goodness in those means, and that he gives so much freedom to them that they might incline to attend those means and so look to him, and turn at his reproof; and that in so looking and turning he will give them supernatural and spiritual light, and save them; that they for all this, not minding his goodness, nor turning to him, he should not onely forbear tumbling them down into destruction, but also strive with more means and more force of spirit, so stretching forth his hand as to remove the yoke from their jaws, setting their will in some seasons at such liberty that they might chuse life, and he in such seasons also laying meat before them, and calling them

them, what saith all this to us, doth it not say that God is infinite in love, wisdom, and mercy, to give such a Saviour by whom such mercie is procured? that his love, and bounty to mankinde, yea his patience, forbearance, and long suffering is very great? the revelation of his minde, that all might be saved, very true? and doth it not say likewise that God is just, and righteous, and his ways equal in condemning such for and to whom he hath done so much? and they so willingly rebell against him, & refuse such salvation, doth it not also speak forth the truth of Gods words, that he wills not the death of the wicked that dyeth, but rather that he turn, and live? and that those that perish, do forsake their own mercies, loose their own souls, and in their calamity, eat the fruit of their own ways? and for such as believe, they may herein see all the mercies they have from first to last, the free gift of God by *Christ*, and doth not this say likewise, that men were wholly lost, corrupt, and dead, that by *Christ* a restoration is wrought, and mercy extended? that they are beholding to him, and his blood and spirit for all the good motions that come to them? that he having so freely dyed for them and now doing so much to them, it is their own fault, and a foul, and inexcusable fault, that they remain impenitent, unbelieving, and disobedient? yea and speaketh not this also for the good of man, of believers to preach the Gospel, and therein to use reproofs, and exhortations, seeing that they may speak to men in their own language, in a tongue that God giveth men to understand? and it speaks good for others to encourage men to hearken to the word of God, and attend to his Ordinances, and yield up to his teachings, and motions, according to the light and strength vouchsafed, and to watch to all opportunities, and lay hold on the seasons of Gods visitations seeing he is nigh to them therein, and much blessing to be met within them, and great danger in neglecting them: yea, yet again; this truth about so much grace extended by God to

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men, would if believed, free men from those evil thoughts of God, as that his will is the prime cause of most mens destruction that he sends Gospel, and useth means, and proclaims love to men, and calls them to repent, but neither intends good to them, nor gives them any power or freedom by which they might come to repentance; yea it would free them from those vain excusings of themselves; when they neglect to hear the Word, to attend the Ordinances of God, to shew mercy to men, or to forbear such evil courses as they run into, by pleading, we have no power of our selves, and God hath given us none, and were it his will, we should do these things, and repent, &c. He would not onely use outward means, and put in a motion, but overcome us with an almighty, and unresistable power, and till he so do, we had as good sit still as strive to no purpose, we are blinde, and deaf, and dead, and nothing; it is God that doth all; therefore the blame is not ours, from all which unsavorie stuff this truth believed would free; yea it would also free from the conceits of harshness, and contradictions in the sayings of the Gospel, and from murmuring against God; all which the contrary opinion lead to. But I have yet heard some say, that this opinion of Gods extending such grace to natural men, that they might believe, it doth magnifie some men as better than others, that is, such as by such light and means are brought in to believe, when others by the same were not; and to this I answer, that some are brought in by such means as others are not; and that it is the fault of them which are not, and by that fault they become worse, is true, else how shall that be righteous judgement when one shall be produced against another in judgement, *Matth. 10. 15. and 11. 22. and 12. 41, 42.* And that he that believes is better than he that did not is true, but that any betterness in himself made him a believer is false; but by grace, he is better in believing: this may be illustrated by a comparision though all are too scant for spiritual things; suppose two men by their own folly become blinde,

deaf, dumb, and so dead ; here is both their sin and their misery ; If one carry good things to them , to see , hear , &c. They are both alike unworthy , and unable, but if one be helpt with sight, hearing, &c. and the other not, and then both called, if he that hath his sight, &c. behold not , it is his sin ; but the other, it is not his sin, but his misery, if both have sight, hearing, &c. given, here is grace alike to alike unworthy, if both be called , and they heed not to see , hear, &c. both are faulty alike ; but now if the call be continued , and greater discovery of good things made, and by the excellencie of the grace and riches discovered , one be drawn to behold , and minde that he seeth, and heareth , and so come to receive those free offers , and the other willingly close his eyes, and stop his ears, and so refuse, and be punished, here is free grace to the one that deserved no more than the other ; yea grace more obliging him still , and here is equal, and just punishment to the other , who is willingly now become worse , so that man is no way exalted in this : and indeed when and whosoever God hardens, blindes , and reprobates , he doth it equally in righteousness, judicially, and justly , when , and after he hath given eyes, and ears, to see, and hear ; and touched the heart , and then called , and they closed their eyes , and ears, and hardened their hearts till God left them , as is shewn in opening the particulars of the truth affirmed , in all which it appears to tend to the abasing of man by nature , and the glorifying Gods grace : But yet to clear the business, I shall endeavour to answer some scruples , and objections , that some think the Scripture occasions to be made against it, 1 Cor. 2. 9, 14. Eye hath not seen, &c. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God , &c. Neither can he know them.

Ans. This is wholly and verily true , and there is nothing in the affirmation that doth so much as seem to unsay any part or word of these verses, for here is not exprest those things that God hath done for the sons of men, in creating of them righteous, in giving his Son to dye for them, when fallen , in promise-

ing remission of sins to such as repent and believe in his Son, in calling, and using means : that men might repent, and believe; in stretching out his hand by his Spirit, working in them, that they might believe, and promising great happiness to them believing; these are the things to be set before all men, and God gives them eyes that they might see, & in discoverie they do see, though they will not see, that is, use their sight, *Matth. 13. 14, 15.* And it is not the will of God, though the Gospel, and grace of God, and house of God be shewn them; if they be not by that sight, and grace seen, humbled, and converted; that they should see within the excellencies of the house, and kingdom of God, *Ezek. 43. 10, 11.* the Prophet must first shew the house to the children of *Israel* that they may be ashamed and repent, &c. and if by that sight they be ashamed, then shew them the excellencies, &c. And so our Saviour saith, Except a man be born of water, and the spirit, he cannot enter into (and so not see) the kingdom of God in the excellencies thereof, and it is nowhere affirmed, that the natural man hath given him, while he remains natural, either discerning, or freedom of will to chuse such supernatural and spiritual things as these; yea the believers discerning of these, is but in a little measure in respect of what is in them, they being such things as are not yet fully given to them by way of possession, but prepared and laid up for, & so to be waited for by those that love, and wait for *Jesus*, as *1 John 3. 1, 2. Tit 2. 13.* All which agreeth with, and confirmeth what I have affirmed, *Joh. 15. 4, 5.* without me ye can do nothing.

Ans. This is also very true, and there is nothing in what I have affirmed cross to this; for all that which is given into the minde, or will of a natural man, to fit him to attend, and yield to those means *Christ* useth to him for good, is affirmed to be the work of his own grace, and so this saying is a caveat to humble them, and that they may not think to help themselves by the mountain he hath made them, but knowing their imbecility use rightly what they have, to abide still looking to him, and

waiting on him, to perfect all that concerns them, and so receiving, and yielding up still to his instructions, and motions, that so his word may abide in them, and they in this grace of his, suitable to that is said, *Rom. 10 8, 9, 10.* with *1 John 3. 5.* Though they here spoken to were more than meer natural men to whom yet even this caveat and instruction was needfull; so that this agreeth with that I have affirmed, & instructeth and presseth to the right use thereof, *Rom. 9. 16.* It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Ans. A heavenly truth, and blessed instruction, and nothing in it crossing any thing in the affirmation I have made, and set down: the people of whom *Moses* spake, and for whom he interceded, God had shewed mercie to already, saved them out of *Egypt*, and through the sea, and set his promises before them of bringing them into *Canaan*; and they had heard his voice, seen his miracles, &c. And God had done as much for them, as I have affirmed, done to, and in natural men, and because they continued not believing his word, and setting their hearts to his wonders shewn, as they ought, and might; therefore God gave them not that, which I have all the way affirmed, peculiar to believers, a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear the mysteries of God, that in spirituals they might follow him; and that *Moses* that affirms the former given them, and from thence exhorts them, *Deut. 4. and 6. and 7. and 10.* Doth yet affirm this not given them of God, as yet, *Deut. 29. 4.* and that sure not to excuse their sin, and lay the blame on God, but to aggravate their sin, and rebellion to be very great, in not seeing and heeding what they saw, &c. Else sure the mercifull God that had done so much for them, and promised so much to them freely, would have given them such an heart before now, so that it was sin, they had not that gift, even as it was the sin of those, *John 16. 8, 9.* they had not believed, though faith be the gift of God, *Ephes. 2. 8.* And thus those that had received much mercy, did so provoke God, that he might justly forbear to shew them any farther

farther mercy, but have consumed them all, but yet he would not, but to whom he pleased of them to shew mercy, and be gracious to them he would, and who they were and are, he hath shewn, even them that are humbled by this his reproof, and so forsake their own thoughts, or purposes, and ways; and by the discoveries of his goodness turn to him, *Fer.* 18. 1, 7, 8. *Psal.* 55. 7. And this to be the meaning of God, and *Moses* is evident by the whole scope of *Deuteronomy*, and this, 29. & the 30. chapter, which else had been in vain and to no purpose to such a people.

Again note the things of which the Apostle speaks, in making use of that saying of the Lord in *Moses* writings; and they appear to be supernatural and spiritual things, as the new birth, the birth effected by the promise, and so the appearance, efficacy, and election of grace therein: and so of the communication, of remission of sins, justification, righteousness, peace, &c. *verf.* 8. Such as the discerning of, and freedom of will in chusing is not affirmed to be in the natural man, much less that these things should be in him, or of him by any natural power, or by his willing, or running to work out, or reach to himself, they being things to be received upon the free gift, and tender in believing.

Yet again, note that he saith, these things are of God, it is in his power, love, mercy, and faithfulness still to give, and work in us to receive; he hath not limited himself, nor set bounds to his will to hinder him from being gracious when he will, and to whom he will, that from him it may be looked for: and yet farther note, that he saith, that God of whom it is sheweth mercy, so that he hath not yet excluded such persons as will, and run, but still sheweth mercy, gives them (who of themselves are blinde and deaf) some sight, and hearing that they might see, and hear, and so in seeing and hearing be convinced of the vileness of their sins against so good a God, and the vanity of their own ways and strifes in willing, and running, and so fall down before him, accepting the freeness of his grace receiving it to be saved by it; see an example of a receiver, *Phil.* 3. 3, 7, 8, 9. and of refusers.

2 *Thef.* 2. 10. So that this place agreeth with and directeth to the right use of that I have affirmed to be given by *Christ* to natural men, and is a like pressing caveat, instruction and exhortation to that mentioned, *John* 15. 4, 5. *John* 6. 44, 65. No man can come to me, except the father which hath sent me draw him, except it were given unto him of my father.

Ans. Surely this is altogether true, and a sweet instruction, motive, and reproof; but here is nothing in it denying, or crossing any thing I have affirmed; for,

1. That I have affirmed, that it is of Gods working to draw to *Christ*, as is seen in all said.

2. God draweth many with the cords of a man, and bands of love, that yet do not come in to him, but draw back, *Hos.* 11. 3, 4, 7. and our Saviour said not, that all that the father draweth do come to me; but every one that hath heard, (in which hearing the bands of love do fasten; and learned (that is received his instructions, and so renounced himself and accepted of *Christ*, and therein chosen life) cometh to me.

3. This saying of our Saviour is used as an admonition to them, because of their own imbecility that cannot of themselves come to receive his instruction, and lay hold on the opportunity afforded, receiving the love of the truth appearing, and the heavenly bread now given them by the Father that sent the Son, that is now calling on them, that by his grace they may believe on him, and so come to him, who will give them life, *John* 6. 27, 29, 32, 33. for if he withdraw, & give them up for contempt, then they cannot believe, or come, as, *John* 12. 35, 40. with *Mat.* 13. 14, 15. Suffer not the day of visitation to pass by unminded, take heed of being found the murmurers against him, as, *John* 6. 43. least that be verified, *Matth.* 23. 37, 38. *Luke* 19. 42.

4. Lastly, this saying of our Saviour is not used to lay the blame of their not coming upon God, but on themselves, whose fault it was, *John* 5. 34, 40. as *Moses* did the like, *Deut.* 29. 4. & 30. 15, 16. And so to reprove them for not accepting his words, and coming

coming while his Father was drawing, and to shew the faithfulness of his ministration to them, who had forewarned them of this; and their departure to be of themselves, because they refused to come in the Fathers drawing, without which he had taught them they could not come, he mindes them, that therefore he had said this unto them, *vers. 65.* So that this saying agreeth well with, and leads to the right understanding, and use of that I have affirmed like that, *John 15. 4. 5. Phil. 2. 13.* It is God that worketh in you both the will and the deed, &c.

Ans. This is nothing against any thing I have affirmed; because in that affirmed, all that is good, is shewn to be the free gift, and work of God by *Christ*: But the text is not as it is here alledged; nor so as will bear such a sense, but thus:

For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of good pleasure (or as some) both to will, and to accomplish according to his good pleasure, (or as others) both to will, and to do of good will, all these having one and the same sense; the will being theirs, though given them of God; and the doing appertaining to them, though by that strength given them of God, and that grace discovered, and given, which moveth the will to that is good, being another gift of God, and his work; and that strength enabling them to do being a fruit of the same grace and Spirit, and so of God, inabling them for to do that is spiritually good; so as if they yield up to it, they have the favour and strength of God going along with them to assist, bless, and safeguard them; but if they neglect and smother the light and motion, turning aside, and rebell against him, then can they without him do nothing that is good, but resisting against God they may fear decays, and chastisements; whence those admonitions, *Eph. 4. 30. 1 Thes. 5. 19. 1 John 3. 17.*

And upon this ground the Apostle exhorteth them to work out their own Salvation (that which wrought within them, and this) with fear and trembling, and to do all things (this grace requireth) without murmurings, or disputings, that they might be

leads to the right use of what I have said. For that which is
 15. 4. 5. though in this place also, is intended to be taken
 are looked on, who have some portion of the light of truth,
 and by some discerning of, and being sensible of their need for,
 and to that which is spiritually good, and by some discerning of,
 and working in them; and are directed to the right use of that,
 the right use of that, as Gal. 2. 6. which is the same as they
 want; therefore it is requisite that the Gospel which discovers
 that which will work is intended to be discovered to them;
 and they exhorted according to that light and freedom God
 giveth them, to believe, and receive the love of the truth to
 save them, that so they may receive that which yet they have
 not.

And thus have I faithfully and plainly in homely phrases
 declared our persuasion in this business: and if in this any that
 love *Jesus Christ*, and seek the glory of God in Christ, and
 the good of men be otherwise minded: I hope wherein either
 either of us come short of the fulness of truth, our gracious
 God will reveal the same to us, only wherein we have al-
 ready attained let us walk by the same rule; let us make the
 same thing, and not judge or despise, defame and slander one a-
 nother. But with all humbleness of minde, endeavour to keep
 the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and joyntly seek
 the glory of our Master *Christ Jesus*, and the good of those he
 hath dyed for, and the prospering of those whom by virtue of
 his death he hath brought in to believe in him, which is the
 desire, and shall be the prayer of the meanest and unworthiest
 of that number.

Witness my hand at London this 10th day of *Thomas Moore*
Whittlesee, Decemb. 12.

And hathory and equibh
 1651

FINIS.